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he should himself be a worker in any particular form of Art, though he should be familiar with the processes of each. Artists in general do not make good critics, though their special suggestions are of great use to each other; they work within prescribed circles and cannot easily go forth from them to assume new centers of view; they see through the haze of their own ideas, to the expression of which all their hours are given. The critic then must be, not necessarily something more, but someelse than an artist. Give him an executive power and you give him limitations which would cripple his critical power.

Such are some of the elements in the constitution of an Art-critic. Let all those who essay to instruct the public about Art and artists, learn and tremble.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN.

FIRST ARTICLE.

A general view of the pending Exhibition of the Academy shows that it is marked by fewer large and imposing works than the display of last year. We observe no full-length portraits with ample margin of canvas, arrogating an amount of space far more than commensurate with the interest of their subjects. The landscapes, also, are smaller; Gignoux's "Glimpse of Mt. Blanc" is the only one conspicuous in size. We shall not deplore the general absence of large canvases; not, but that in certain subjects, size is an element of power; they, however, who can afford to give their time to the right elaboration of large pictures, can afford a special display of their work. But while the exhibition, on the first view, seems tamer and less interesting than the last, a more careful examination will, we think, reveal a greater number of works of real substantial merit. Certainly the Exhibition of this year is disfigured by fewer positively bad pictures, obtruded in conspicuous places. The Council seems to have exercised a wholesome restraint in certain directions, moved thereto, doubtless, by the severity of last year's current criticisms. It is not to be supposed, however, that they have attempted to be just, that they have not favored themselves first, and their particular friends next,—this were not in the course of Academic nature. There is ample proof on the walls that they have not consulted pure justice. Why, for instance, have they given Eugene Benson's "Cloud Towers" a position upon the line? The picture is utterly, irretrievably bad —bad in conception, utterly bad in execution. The answer is, because Mr. Benson has the entrée of some of the editorial sanctums of the city, and his favor must be propitiated. The alliance of cause and consequence is too plain for mistake. We are loth to express ourselves as we do about Mr. Benson's work, but its prominence forces us to plainness of speech. Mr. Benson wields a very facile pen, and we are surprised that the readable literary and the intolerable pictorial productions should come from the same hand.

But enough of fault-finding. We wish to retain our good humor, to preserve our most genial mood. We desire to extract as much honey from the exhibition as we can, and to distill as much as possible into the honeycomb of this journal. If a picture has no sweetness in it, and is not forced upon us, as is Mr. Benson's, we shall be very glad to pass it by in silence. Nevertheless, in the case of the really nutritious pictures we mean to be discriminating, and, as far as our analytical powers will bear us out, to separate the sweet from the bitter or chaffy.

Having carefully gone the round of the rooms once—twice—thrice, we ask ourselves the question, which is *the* picture of the Exhibition? Gignoux's powerful, yet by no means unexceptionable, work recurs to mind. Constant Mayer's "Love's Melancholy" charms us with its delicate metaphysical sentiment; Eastman Johson's "Comfort in Weariness," with its perfect genre painting, has deeply impressed us; and Wm. Hunt's three-quarter length portrait of a Mother and Child is by far the greatest in its kind upon the walls. McEntee's "October in the Kattskills" dwells in our memory with its sweet and rich foliage, its exquisite cloud-rendering, and its surprising gules of sunlight. Other works, as "November in New Jersey," by J. C. White; "Studies from Nature," by Eaton; "Tennessee" and Studies by Wyant; "Autumn Woods," by Whittredge; Griswold's "Last of the Ice;" a small landscape by Samuel Colman; Vedder's "Paysage Fiesole;" a "Moonlight" by Fuechsel, some mountain views by Bristol, and a few other works have, notwithstanding imperfections, left a decided and wholesome flavor of sweetness in our thought.

But the discriminating visitor to the gallery will not find in any landscape, excellent as many of them are, the great picture of the Exhibition. But if he will pause long enough in quiet receptivity before "The Gun Foundery" by J. F. Weir, the massive drawing of the work, the grand intermingling of fire-light from the molten metal with the light from the roof and the floating fumes of the furnaces, the distinctness of details amid the fumy obscurity, the masterly centering of all expectation upon the pouring of the fiery and spluttering metal into the mold, in a word, the dramatic intensity of the scene and the occasion, will hold him spell-bound and breathless, until at last he will gain relief by pronouncing the work before him the greatest of the Exhibition.

RAMBLES AMONG THE GALLERIES.

A good picture does not necessarily take the high rank of a work of art. Visiting our Academic shows and dealer's galleries, we find everywhere fair illustrations of life and manners, past and present, good imitations of natural things, pleasant combinations of color, all generally well composed and drawn, but—these things are not Art; you enter a gallery and, if you chance to be in an easy frame of mind, you are amused with the varied and brilliant show, but you carry away no deep and lasting impression, you could crush the whole butterfly collection in the hollow of your hand, there is nothing in it. Yet occasionally one meets with a work which stamps itself upon his heart or imagination; he leaves it refreshed, ennobled, serious.

The lover of Art—that *rara avis* which must be distinguished from the picture-fanciers, a numerous and noisy flock—will find at Avery's a work of this latter character. We refer to Washington Allston's "Vision of the Bloody Hand." The work is founded upon a scene in one of Mrs. Radcliffe's novels, wherein the original legend, from which the murder scene in "Macbeth" is derived, receives a new turn. But the work hardly needs the interpretation of the novel, it tells the story, and far more powerfully, for itself. The characters are a hired assassin and a monk, who urges him to the deed of death. The assassin, reeking with the memory of past crimes, hesitating, sees a bloody hand beckoning him on. The monk, holding forth the light and grasping the hand of the assassin, peers forward, unmoved, to learn what it is so terrifies his mean associate. The feeling of the piece is quite other than that of the similar scene in "Macbeth." Two types of character are presented; on the one hand, the assassin, of sensual instincts and undeveloped mind, but yet impressible, capable of being swayed by the imagination, religious in his way, given to devout worship of the saints after the perpetration of the deed; on the other hand, the monk, having a developed forehead, a sharp, decisive nose, close, firm, thin lips,—but all this intellectual and executive character is pushed forward beyond the moral, it is isolated, there is no reverence, no belief, no impressibility, there is only a calm, relentless purpose and the close wit to carry it through. If the one is a brutal sensualist, he is yet human; the other has developed beyond humanity—he is a devil. The thrilling power of the work arises in great part from this contrast of character. The poor fellow who, with half-naked limbs, cringes almost to the ground from terror of the bloody hand, is pulled forward by the tall monk, in sombre robes, calm, fixed in purpose, sublimely overtopping the workings of imagination and the fears of conscience.

Washington Allston is acknowledged as, perhaps, the greatest name in American Art; yet few Americans are familiar with his works. Mr. Avery has done the New York public great service by adding this one to his gallery; we earnestly hope that he will from time to time include others of the artist's works, if only on loan for a short period of exhibition. Our Boston friends might be induced to do us barbarians that service.

Among the other works now at Avery's are a "Lake Scene" by Jas. M. Hart, "General Meade's Headquarters at Gettysburgh" by Cropsey, "Autumn" by McEntee, a "Lake in the Adirondacks" by Fuechsel, one of Eastman Johnson's charming genre paintings, a "Swamp Scene" by Hope, and a large landscape by A. B. Durand, which contains in the foreground fine illustrations of his exquisite tree-drawing and grouping, and in the middle-ground a beautiful interfusion of light and mist, through which, nevertheless, a great variety of truthful detail may be discerned.

There is also at Avery's the portrait of Durand, by Elliott, which was included in last year's exhibition of the Academy. This portrait is to be engraved as a companion-piece to the portrait of Bryant by Durand, and to be published by subscription. We observe that the list of subscribers is already nearly full.

The names of Bryant and Durand have been associated for many years. They belong to the same cycle of poetry and art—a cycle which is now nearly rounded off. Many have dropped down by the wayside, or fallen like ripe fruit, and the few that remain are gray with years. There is much of a common quality in the poetry of Bryant and the landscape of Durand. Both poet and artist express a calm, reflective mood, both are filled with a simple yet profound moral sentiment, both are hermits of the woods and feel that the very mold is instinct with God, both are purely national and have looked to our own wilds for that primal inspiration which European civilization is wont to lose beneath its accumulated traditions and refinements. Honor to them, the bard and the artist, seers of nature, and let us hang their portraits, side by side, in our studios and our libraries!